Meeting of National Board of Wildlife

†400. SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in the meeting of the newly constituted National Board of Wildlife held in Delhi recently, the concern on the smuggling of wild animals has been expressed and a number of suggestions were given to check the same as there is a great danger of extinction of valuable wild animals from the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps being taken by Government to check the smuggling of these animals?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) During the first meeting of the newly constituted National Board for Wildlife held on 15th October, 2003, the Members expressed concern over the illegal trade of wildlife in the country. Members suggested various measures to curb such activities. These, *inter-alia*, include :

(i) Filling up of existing vacancies of field staff and relaxing the restrictions imposed on the recruitment of new staff for protected areas;

(ii) Establishment of Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) Cell in India;

(iii) Integration of wildlife conservation with other sectoral programmes;

(iv) Setting up a Task Force For conservation of wildlife outside the protected areas;

(v) Identification of threatened plants and formulation of long term recovery plan for them.

(c) The following steps are taken by the Government to check smuggling of wild animals in the country:

(i) Rare and endangered species of wild animals are included in the Schedule-I of Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972. Unauthorized hunting of animals, disturbing or damaging their habitats is a punishable offence.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(ii) Export of animals included in the Schedules of Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 is prohibited.

(iii) Government of India has set up Regional and Sub regional offices for wildlife preservation in major export and trade centres of the country to check smuggling of wild animals and their products.

(iv) Central Bureau of Investigation has been empowered under the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 to apprehend and prosecute wild life offenders.

(v) Government receives international cooperation under the provisions of CITES for control of trade in wildlife items at international level.

Proposals for construction works received from Government of Uttaranchal

†401. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of proposals of construction works received for approval from the State Government of Uttaranchal under Forests Act during the last three years;

(b) whether all these proposals have been approved; and

(c) if not, details of rejected proposals?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) to (c) Out of total 408 proposals for construction works received from Government of Uttaranchal for approval under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 during last three years (2001, 2002 and upto November, 2003), 351 proposals have been approved by the Central Government under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. Out of balance 57 proposals for construction works, 15 proposals have been rejected on merit and 42 proposals have been closed/returned to the State Government due to incomplete information. The project category-wise details of construction works and details of rejected proposals are given in Statement-I and Statement-II respectively (*See* below).

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.